CHAPTER 8

"Seek out peace and pursue it."

St. Benedict

BENEDICTINE GIFTS

If art can be said to be the reflection of its age and period, music is certainly its echo. This is not simply a passive echo, for music reverberates in the minds and hearts of its listeners creating an ethos which powerfully affects their physical health, their creative abilities, and their spiritual life, or lack thereof. Between the raucousness of heavy metal and the calm luminous melody of plainchant lies a whole octave of Being. The ancient Greeks were right---music is still the regulator. Whether we admit it or not, we are all subject to a particular drummer. Our relative freedom lies in choosing the song.

More than anything we need a way to make God's presence real, a part of our experience. Everywhere we turn people are searching, running from workshop to workshop, trying each new fad in the ever expanding market of spiritual opportunism. We read many books, engage in activities galore, stress ourselves even more to overcome the tension and busyness that troubles us in the first place. Given the prevailing state of affairs in society and in ourselves, the contemplative tradition of the Christian Church may seem remote and difficult to access. Many of us have only a passing acquaintance with the holy Fathers and Mothers of years gone by. Our interiorization of the sacred scriptures remains superficial, often caught in a mixture of fundamentalism, scholarly attempts to explain everything, or simple neglect and indifference.

Meeting us in our situation of need, the Benedictines can offer us three precious gifts: first, the chant itself; then, inspiration for the contemporary composer of sacred music; and finally, the example of a way of being that will help us, more and more, to find rest in God's holy presence and, therein, find a measure of peace.

The Holistic Benefits of Chant

Chant is not a gift that the Benedictines have created, since its roots go back we know not where or when—no doubt to the whisperings of the Holy Spirit itself into the ears of countless generations of anonymous composers. What the Benedictines have done, however, is to preserve this treasure in the most effective way possible, which is by making it part of their lives.

For those interested primarily in receiving holistic benefits, listening to chant with one's full attention brings a balanced and peaceful state of mind and body; chant is healthful and energizing. Research by French Dr. Alfred Tomatis has shown that there are sounds known as "discharge" sounds, which fatigue the listener, and "charge" sounds which give energy and health.[1] Charge sounds are rich in high frequencies, whereas discharge sounds are of low frequency. Dr. Tomatis put an oscilloscope to the sounds of Gregorian chant and found that it contains all the frequencies of the voice spectrum, roughly 70 to 9,000 hertz, but with a very different envelope curve from that of normal speech. The monks sing in the medium range—that of a baritone—but due to the unity and resonance of the sound, their voices produce rich overtones of higher frequency. It is these high tones, mainly in the range of 2,000 to 4,000 hertz, that charge the brain with energy.

It has always been part of the traditional understanding that sound is causative or formative, meaning that it has power to create certain effects in spirit, mind, and body. Indeed, sound literally matters. It has the power to give shape to materials. Swiss physicist Hans Jenny performed a number of astonishing experiments illustrative of the effect of sound on inert matter. He placed substances such as iron filings, drops of water, soap bubbles, and lycopodium powder (spores of club moss) on a diaphragm and subjected them to a variety of sounds. The result was a series of flowing, changing patterns of great beauty and complexity. These patterns have been recorded and are shown in Professor Jenny's videotapes and two-volume presentation entitled *Cymatics*

(the science of the way the properties of a medium change under the influence of vibration).[2]

Human beings are much more sensitive to what they hear than inert matter! We have five senses, five groups of organs (hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell) through which we are in contact with external reality. We relate to this reality in three ways: intellectually, emotionally, and actively. These modes constitute the basis for the formation of the personality, which is envisaged as being oriented along three great currents of psychic activity—intellectual, emotional, and motor. Each of these is associated with a psychosomatic relation with a body location where it appears to evoke a resonance. Of course the somatic seat of these functions cannot be precisely located, yet popular language, often vivid and direct, speaks of head, heart, and guts in this connection. This is a rather simple, yet profound observation. Such a framework provides a useful and practical model, grounded in a robust common sense and informed by keen psychological observation through centuries of practice. It can be developed into a very fine instrument for self observation as well as for gaining insight into others' behavior.

The music we hear is primarily apprehended by one center, emotional, intellectual, or active, although all music contains elements of each. Repeatedly acting on that center, it imparts its quality to our personality; it provides energy to the center to which it is directed. As far as Gregorian chant is concerned, it does not serve primarily to set us thinking or incite us to action. Instead it provides relief from the surfeit of ideas and activities that fatigue and weaken us, giving us something of great importance---nourishment for the heart.

In the same way that what one thinks is not a matter of indifference, the sounds one produces and listens to are also of vital import. When we attend a concert or turn on the radio or CD player we need to ask ourselves the essential questions, "What effect is this sound or this music having on my mind, my heart, and my body?" "Where do I feel it and what is it doing?"

The Practice of Chant

Those who wish to go beyond just listening and penetrate more deeply into the musical treasure house of chant actually practice it. In order for this practice to have the desired effect—which is to assist us to draw near to God—it must be taught by musicians skilled in its rules and practice and cognizant of its spiritual value. When this is the case, a door is opened to contemplative practice and singers are led to a very different experience of the Christian life.

Rembert Herbert, who served for many years as Cantor of St. James's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, Washington, DC and from 1986 to 1999 as director of the Schola Cantorum of New York provides an extremely clear and insightful explanation of the far-reaching benefits of chanting in his book *Entrances: Gregorian Chant in Daily Life*.[3] He points, in particular, to the fact that chant is both a diagnostic tool and a cure for the state of mental agitation in which we often find ourselves. Even a few minutes of its practice can point out to each of us our lack of attention and focus, our tendency to be everywhere except in the present moment—the only place where God is to be found. Chant shows us that our human ability to perceive what is most important and most deeply true is far from consistent and changes frequently as we move from apathy to a deeper awareness and inspiration and back again.

Gregorian chant, sung in Latin or in vernacular language, has rules that have been consciously designed to disarm, to disorient, and to awaken. This is to be expected, since any spiritual practice worth it salt contains some element of offense to the everyday world. In one way or another it says "no" to doing things in "any old way" or as we, personally, might prefer.

The singer of chant learns to be self-directed but in full awareness of the whole group. Even when the liturgy calls for what might seem to be a "solo performance," the simplicity and straightforwardness of the melodic line will soon reveal any traces of

personal ego appearing in the sound. Each individual needs to be aware of the fact that the sound emerges from silence, rises as on the crest of a wave, and then returns to silence. The singer must be continuously alert, making a conscious, non-mechanical, relaxed effort to stay with the group.

In chanting the liturgy, diction needs to be precise—a practice which cuts across habits of sloppy speech and articulation—so that the Word, which is the point of the practice, may be clearly heard. In an age when the expression of the individual's every thought and feeling on any and all subjects is highly esteemed, here the effort is precisely to make no attempt to sing "with expression" or to "create a melodic line." Herbert puts it this way:

> Rather than a "line," a chant melisma should be thought of as a succession of still moments not coming from anywhere, not going anywhere. The choir should sound as if it could stop at any instant in the melisma and remain at that moment forever. The melisma is a kind of study in the paradox of stillness in motion. The voices move but give the effect of not moving. At any moment in the melody, the "present moment" is the only moment of consequence.[4]

Chant is purposely "poor" in the expression of individual personality and artistry. There is nothing in it to excite the superficial emotions or the senses and, for this reason, it brings deep refreshment and rest. Its overriding lesson is that even when singing a chant's most demanding melismas, singers need to practice a simple, prayerful approach. The text should be allowed to speak in its own voice without interference from the singers.

When chant is skillfully practiced, it becomes much more than a tool for mirroring our mental and emotional state. It has the effect of stilling the mind and opening the heart. In particular, it awakens a deeper intelligence and receptivity in responding to the words both of scripture and of the Church Fathers.

Sacred texts have the capacity to speak to us according to the occasion and our need. If our minds are literal, then one meaning is provided. If we move, through

disciplined singing of chant and through prayer, to a deeper level, scripture meets us there with a more profound symbolic meaning.

In chanting the liturgy people are often puzzled by a phenomenon known as centonization or "patchwork" whereby the texts for the chants of the Proper are taken from widely separated parts of the Bible, so as to create a new mini-text, with its own special focus. The centonization serves to identify the major themes of the particular day or feast and makes the individual aware of the many scattered instances where it is mentioned or alluded to, literally or prophetically. Rembert Herbert explains that when the awakened and stilled intelligence of the individual meets the words of scripture, these words are then found to be symbols with particular meaning to each person:

> The central idea behind the symbolic use of the Bible is that all of scripture speaks a consistent message in a consistent language. The message lies on a plane above the historical context of any given passage and is constant throughout the centuries. From the point of view of the true author, the Holy Spirit, writings which seem to us many centuries apart are simultaneous, one sentence right with another, Old and New Testaments created "together," in a timeless present. All these writings speak of transcendent and unchanging realities—the laws and being of God, the inner nature of the human person reaching for God, the mysteries of Christ and his Church."[5]

In what is essentially a monastic view, Herbert goes on to point out:

> In order to enter the Fathers' world, we must become comfortable with this allegorical or symbolic language. We must first of all accept at least the possibility that every word of scripture is true in an exact symbolic sense, and that symbolism is the necessary language of the inner world of the spirit. The forces that operate in that world shape our lives, and yet the language of contemporary culture gives us only the most awkward terms with which to name them. To enter that world, we must also adjust our habits of mind to accommodate multiple meanings, multiple types of meaning, the often unexpected behavior of inner forces, and different ways of "receiving" meaning.[6]

In the contemplative tradition it is typical to find the sacred text delivered in small, very compact pieces, as it is in chant. As opposed to longer texts designed to offer explanation and pleasure to the intellect, these short pieces allow the singer time to more

closely examine and inwardly digest the words. He or she then perceives that there are a number of equally valid interpretations of the text, that it is, in fact, speaking to each person in an intensely personal way. The process is that of moving progressively from the literal to the symbolic meaning and even beyond that to a place where the words are perceived as pure energy or consciousness.

The practice of Gregorian chant and the reading of the writings of the Church Fathers go together. Chant is a musical interpretation of scripture and the writings are a verbal one. The point of engaging in both is not merely to find more hidden meanings behind the literal meaning. Rather, it provides us with a glimpse of a totally different reality, expressed by Thomas Merton as "the divine life itself."

Chant has been cited by the conclusions of The Second Vatican Council as especially suited for the Roman liturgy. It is to be hoped that it will continue to be reintroduced in the churches, along with its rich heritage of polyphonic music, and that the secular clergy in the parishes will increasingly choose the finest, most expert musicians, in tune with the Gregorian tradition, to lead their choirs. Precision and accuracy are of the greatest importance, if the spiritual gift of the chant liturgy is to be fully realized in our services of worship, and within us personally.

Inspiration for a New Song

A thought-provoking article on what makes music sacred was written in 1999 for *Crisis* magazine by Robert R. Reilly.[7] In it Reilly points out that the traditional role of music—"to make the transcendent perceptible and, in so doing, exercise a formative ethical impact on those who listen to it"—has been lost for most of the twentieth century. In fact the very opposite has been at work. Composers have been eager to imitate the sound of the crowd in their effort to be reflective of what is rather than to create and give directives to what should be. Exercising a kind of positive feedback, they have reproduced what is emerging from society—its violence, confusion, and despair. The

effect of this picking up and amplifying wave after wave of deleterious sound has produced heavy metal and other destructive kinds of music which, if we subscribe to the traditional view, will lead to more and more crime in our streets and homes.

Reilly states that a major problem contributing to the sense of discord and disorientation characteristic of so much of modern music is its loss of tonality, a method of composition wherein the notes and chords of a composition are related to a central key note. He points out that tonality began to be disregarded at the same time that God disappeared from widespread cultural awareness. This "death of God" became as much a problem for music as it was for philosophy. He expresses the dilemma in this way:

> If there is no pre-existing, intelligible order to go out to and apprehend, and to search through for what lies beyond it—which is the Creator—what then is music supposed to express? If external order does not exist, then music collapses in on itself and degenerates into an obsession with techniques. Any ordering of things, musical or otherwise, becomes purely arbitrary.[8]

Citing an example, Reilly recalls the work of Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) who created a system of twelve-tone composition with specific rules—no pitch could be repeated, except immediate repetition, until all twelve notes had been used. This process avoided any particular note's becoming an anchor for the ear, which could then recognize what was going on in the music harmonically. With this "serial" type of approach the music loses any sense of movement away from a state of tension or relaxation, any feeling of motion through crises and conflicts to resolution. The overall effect is one of complete disorientation. Musical composition mirrors the state of society in general—a condition where the difference between one thing and another has been blurred and discrimination, for all intents and purposes, lost. The musical idea is that people are so immersed in atonal music that discords come to be heard as concords. Schoenberg is quoted as saying that he was "conscious of having removed all traces of a past aesthetic...cured of the delusion that the artist's aim is to create beauty."[9]

French composer Pierre Boulez (b. 1925) carried the concept further by applying the total rejection of the past not only to tonality but to every aspect of music—pitch, duration, tone production, intensity, and timbre. Countering the classical view of music as a thing of beauty, designed to lift people up into something greater than themselves, he declared, "Once the past has been got out of the way, one need think only of oneself."[10]

For American composer John Cage (1912-1992) the point was to reject all organization and strive for the non-mental. He composed noise through chance operation, by rolling dice, or drew notes according to the irregularities on the composition paper. (One could say that his closest approach to Benedictinism was the composition of *4'33"* [1952] in which musicians sit silently with their instruments for precisely four minutes and thirty-three seconds!). Whereas Schoenberg often watched TV while composing music according to formulae predetermined by himself, Cage is said to have sliced up tape recordings, jumbled them, pieced them together, and presented them as music. Chance and blind selection replaced consciousness of intent as principles of composition.

Fortunately these attempts were not of long duration. A number of extremely innovative musicians such as Arvo Part (Estonian, b. 1935), Krzysztof Penderecki (Polish, b. 1933), and David del Tredici (American, b. 1937) were among those who began to draw the line, moving away from a musical world where only dissonance and atonality were acceptable. American George Rochberg (b. 1918), the leader of the twelve-tone school of composition in the United States renounced this view and expressed his return to more traditional forms in this way:

> The pursuit of art is much more than achieving technical mastery of means or even a personal style; it is a spiritual journey toward the transcendence of art and the artist's ego...I am turning away from what I consider the cultural pathology of my own time toward what can only be called a possibility: that music can be renewed by regaining contact with the tradition and means of the past, to re-emerge as a spiritual force with re-activated powers of melodic thought, rhythmic pulse, and large scale structure; and, as I see it, these things are only possible with tonality.[11]

A recent New York Times article[12] speaks of American Alan Hovhaness (1911-2000) as rarely transgressing the boundaries of conventional tonality and as emphasizing the importance of the human voice. He is quoted as saying,

> There is a center in everything that exists. The planets have the sun; the moon, the Earth. All music with a center is tonal. Music without a center is fine or a minute or two, but it soon sounds all the same.
> I've used all the techniques including the 12-tone technique. But I believe melody is the spring of music. The human voice was the first instrument, and I believe that all the different instruments are voices as well. So I want to give them melodies to sing. I think melodically and without melody, I don't have much interest in music.

Given the desire manifested by contemporary composers to reconnect sacred music with tradition, we can certainly ask what Benedictines, as bearers of the Christian contemplative tradition, might offer in the creation of "a new song"—an appropriate sacred art form for the new millennium. To clarify their possible contribution we can reflect for a moment on the two meanings of the word "tradition." On one hand, it refers to a set of established ideas and practices passed from generation to generation. In music this means those musical forms which the culture understands—modality, tonality, counterpoint, fugue, canon, symphony, sonata, etc.—and which are collectively remembered. The musician has the choice, of course, of composing mechanically entirely according to pre-established rules.

But as Valentin Tomberg[13] has said, "To be a guardian (of the great spiritual work) signifies two things: the study of and practical application of the heritage of the past, and secondly continuous creative effort aiming at the advancement of the work. For the Tradition lives only when it is deepened, elevated, and increased in size. Conservation alone does not suffice at all..."

Therefore another meaning of "tradition" refers not to the form passed down from years gone by but rather to its living spirit. This tradition is not something to be learned from reading scores or listening to recordings but from practices that put one into direct

contact with the Source that inspired the form in the first place.

A beautiful example of this is provided by the work of Benedictine oblate Therese Schroeder-Sheker, who has pioneered the work of music thanatology which she defines as "a palliative medical modality employing prescriptive music to tend the complex physical and spiritual needs of the dying."[14] Schroeder-Sheker centers her activities at St. Patrick Hospital in Missoula, Montana, USA., where she is academic dean at the School of Music-Thanatology and founder/director of the Chalice of Repose Project. Since 1992 the Chalice of Repose has trained a large and specialized team of music-clinicians who provide musical deathbed vigils in many different hospital, hospice, and home settings.

Schroeder-Sheker explains that the vocal and harp music offered is never the same, even if people are dying of the same disease. The prescriptive music is designed in the moment to match the dynamic physiological changes taking place in the patient's nervous, respiratory, circulatory, and metabolic systems. It is always delivered live, because it is made specifically appropriate to the changing physical, emotional, and spiritual state of the one who is dying.[15]

The music thanatologists who attend at the bedside are skilled both musically and spiritually. They are able, through their own practice of presence and caring, to provide an "anointment with sound" which is extremely helpful not only to the patient but also to the grieving family members.

Trained in medieval studies, Schroeder-Sheker has taken much of her inspiration from monastic medicine as it was practiced in the tenth-century Abbey of Cluny.[16] She states that infirmary practices for the care of the dying developed there clearly predate modern palliative medicine by 800 years. Attention was given to the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual pain that might impede or prevent one from a blessed death. The monastic infirmary at Cluny left detailed accounts, in particular, of the *musical* ways in which the dying were tended.

The Gregorian chant repertory continues to inspire the compositions composed

today by Chalice of Repose practitioners. Schroeder-Sheker sees these melodies as "the language of love," and adds that they "carry the flaming power of hundreds of years and thousands of chanters who have sung these prayers before."[16]

Benedictines remind us of transcendence, of the fact that life as experienced through the senses is designed to teach us about and lead us to a world beyond, which is, in fact, more real, and eternal. Music which they could inspire would not be music which stops here in this world but, like the ancient chant, brings one to a place where everything is true and free from sorrow. Like chant, and like icon paintings, the music would move beyond the strictly individual toward a more universal portrayal of that which is beautiful and good. In it we would hear something divine, something participating in the song of the angels.

This form of art would contain elements of the symbolic and the discrete. It would not tend to force itself on the listener or draw from him or her any particular, pre-determined response. Jean Le Clercq, has expressed this thought with regard to literature but it applies equally well to music:

> Art can be but the reflection of spiritual experience, never a means for provoking it in the writer or in the reader. Sought after for its own sake, it forms a screen between the author and ourselves, the author becomes an aesthete, we are spectators, and there is no longer any communion in love of Truth.[17]

Contemporary American composer and Benedictine oblate Johannes Somary has expressed the attitude appropriate to the composers of sacred music: they should do their work "on their knees."[18]

Sacred music as understood by the Benedictines is "The Word of God singing." Whatever music is to be expressed is actually contained in the Word and is there for those prepared and willing to listen. Like St. Gregory the Great, composers must open their ears to the sounds of the dove whispering in their ears. They must spend time living and

interiorizing the text they wish to use.

Even though Benedictines have always been called upon to be extremely flexible, adapting themselves to the locale and the situation where they find themselves, they never make excessive accommodation either to the time or to the mores of the moment. They are able to allow the shape of the chalice to change somewhat, while retaining the essence within. Composers too are not asked to become slaves to traditional forms, nor to totally reject them. Rather, they are called upon to gather up all their formal training and expertise and then to move aside in order for Spirit to work through them.

This process is eloquently described by English composer John Tavener (b. 1944) in his book *The Music of Silence: A Composer's Testament*[19] which is a series of conversations between Tavener and editor Brian Keeble. Tavener characterizes modernism in music as being the antithesis of communication that has "an unparalleled vocabulary of techniques and formulae. But at the same time it has a parallel lack of symbols, metaphysics, orientation, beauty, and divinity."[20] He goes on to say that:

> Only human beings are in the image of God and only human beings stand on the border, poised between angel and animal. This points to the human capacity to make signs—to make things which re-present realities of a higher dimension in things. We are creatures that point to our Creator. The modernist has already set *himself* up as 'creator,' he has wiped God out of the picture. It is just a dialogue between him and the synthesizer. God is wiped out, humanity is wiped out and so is the cosmos...it is everything goes and anything goes.[21]

The composing itself does not call for a great deal of cerebration. According to Tavener, it is associated with a lack of labor and earthly care, and with total subjection to the word of God. Writing music seems to him like "looking and looking and looking at God, and then copying his work. The work has been done—now glorify."[22]

The second gift, then, that the Benedictines provide is the example of listening to the silence, of creating a place within where God may speak. Composers who learn from

their example will create a New Song—a work of transcendent beauty.

The Way of Devotion

The increasing number of Benedictine oblates and Benedictine lay organizations who follow the Rule bear witness to reception today of the third gift that the Order can offer to us—a model for contemplative life. Even if we do not consider ourselves singers or composers, we can still receive and benefit from this invaluable source of spiritual knowledge.

To help us to understand the "Way of Devotion" modeled for Christians by the Benedictine and other monastic orders, but also present in other spiritual traditions, we will return to the octave. Recall that this is not simply a visual model but one that is made of sound, a medium that, as we saw in the liturgy, the ancients considered eminently appropriate for conveying spiritual knowledge. The diagram is to be read from bottom to top:

The Way of Devotion

Do		Complete union with God
	Interval	Friendship with God
Si		Service to the whole creation
La		Prayer of the heart
Sol		Worship
Fa		Obedience
	Interval	Reflection

Mi	Awakening
Re	Singing praise
Do	Hearing

The octave begins, as Benedict so clearly advises in the Prologue to the Rule, with hearing. We are to listen "with the ear of the heart," in other words with full intention and awareness, so that the activity becomes much more than the sheer taking in of sound impressions. This is the beginning of the octave, the Do, the point where the aspirant becomes aware of the spiritual tradition, in whatever way is open.

Benedict is extremely precise about the second step. As we have seen, he does not simply suggest singing the Lord's praise but, following scriptural directives, actually prescribes it "seven times during the day and once at night" (i.e. an octave). The chant is the first prayer wherein the person learns to listen to the sound of his or her own voice, in the context of the community effort. The song provided is one that will serve to quiet the body and mind and assist the singer to ascertain the state of his or her human instrument at the moment of practice. The octave moves forward on Re with this beginning of self knowledge.

The act of singing has the effect of opening up space in the mind and heart. With this comes the first awakening, represented by the note Mi—an appreciation of the tradition, an acknowledgment of the beauty inherent within it, and a reverence for its teachers.

The other essential practice, that of *lectio divina,* requires the individual's own effort and is present to fill the octave interval. Here one must consciously recall or recollect whatever of importance the spirit has known or made conscious in the past, so that the treasures may go deep and not simply be forgotten. At this point the individual

begins to perceive some of the sweetness so characteristic of the monastic approach. The way, in its fullness, is not yet perceived, and yet abundant light has entered on the way.

With the note Fa more is required. The hearing that was there from the beginning becomes more precise and refined. The individual comes to a fuller realization that God's will for his or her life is right in front, present in the exigencies and relationships of everyday life. It is then a question of increasing obedience to the inner directives abundantly supplied by these demands and challenges. For the monastic, obedience is extended to the following of directions from lawfully elected superiors and working cooperatively with others in the Order.

Worship is represented by the Sol, the dominant, of the octave. It is placed at the center and affects all steps below and above. At this point the individual experiences greater and greater unity between thought, word, and deed. Worship is not simply the carrying out of the liturgy, although this is done with increased fidelity. It becomes the consecration, the making sacred, of all aspects of life. Benedict refers to this when he speaks of welcoming guests as if they were Christ himself and treating the tools of manual labor as if they were articles placed on the altar.

With the ascent of the octave, the way is characterized, more and more, by a drawing near to God. The step La is connected here with prayer, in the same way that it is associated with the Lord's Prayer in the Mass. Whereas the prayer expressed by the chant at step 2 is more external and communal, here it is internalized and intensely personal. There is continual gratitude for all God's wondrous gifts and a subtle change in one's attitude toward work takes place. One fully realizes that, each time work is done with full conscious awareness, the activity itself becomes prayer. The attention is at rest completely with the work and nowhere else. All the activities of life are transformed and assume a transcendent dimension. This rising octave is not to be seen so much as a moving up as a deepening of rest in the Spirit. Each new step includes the preceding ones. It is a widening of the spectrum rather than a floating toward an imaginary heaven.

A person prepared by the preceding steps, is a man or woman in waiting, ready and able to do the Lord's bidding at each and every moment. At this step, the note Si, there is no turning back in providing service to the whole creation through the returning of fine for coarse.

A radiant example of this step is given by Andrew Harvey[23] as he describes precious hours he spent with Benedictine monk Bede Griffiths, when Griffiths was on his death bed. Harvey considered this monk not only as his closest personal friend but as the most holy person he had ever met. He remarks that Fr. Bede never considered his own life and spiritual development as fully achieved. Until the moment of his dying breath, prayer was always on his lips. At the point when his vision had failed and where he was no longer able to recognize his many visitors, he nevertheless took the head of each one in his hands and, weeping in gratitude for their love and caring, offered them his blessing.

The interval between Si and Do is filled by and with the grace of God. The wall of personal ego is no longer present, so it is said, and the person radiates peace and tranquility in all circumstances of life. This step is sometimes referred to as "friendship with God" because, more and more, the man or woman is seen to mirror the divine image of Christ. He or she is not far from the octave's completion, full union with God, which is the aim and purpose of human life.

St. Benedict presents the Way of Devotion as one of loving and peaceful living. He warns us in his Rule that the way "is bound to seem narrow to start with. But, as we progress in this monastic way of life and in faith, our hearts will warm to its vision and with eager love and delight that defies expression we shall go forward on the way of God's commandments."[24] This is the invitation and the promise of the third gift.

Endnotes

1. Tomatis' work is described by Bradford S. Weeks, M.S. in "The Physician, the Ear, and Sacred Music," an essay in *Music Physician for Times to Come,* ed. Don Campbell (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books, 1993), p. 46.
2. Dr. Hans Jenny, *Cymatics: Bringing Matter to Life with Sound,* video by Macromedia, Box 1223, Brookline, MA, USA 02146.

3. Rembert Herbert, *Entrances: Gregorian Chant in Daily Life* (New York: Church Publishing Inc., 1999).
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5. Ibid., p, 23.
6. Ibid., p. 97.
7. Robert R. Reilly*,* *Crisis Magazine*, "Is Music Sacred?" September 1999, pp. 27-31.
8. Ibid., p. 29.
9. Ibid., p. 29.
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12. *New York Times*, "Alan Hovhaness, a Composer Whose Vast Catalog Embraced Many Genres, Dies at 89," Friday, June 23, 2000, p. A21.
13. Valentin Tomberg, *Meditations of the Tarot: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism* (Warwick, NY: Amity House, 1985), p. 608.
14. Therese Schroeder-Sheker, "Music for the Dying," *Noetic Sciences Review*, Autumn 1994, pp. 32-36.
15. Therese Schroeder-Sheker, "Shaping a Sanctuary with Sound: Music-Thanatology and the Care of the Dying," *Pastoral Music,* February-March 1998, pp. 26-41.
16. Therese Schroeder-Sheker, "Death and the Chalice of Repose Project," *Lapis two*, New York Open Center, 83 Spring Street, New York, NY 10012.
17. Jean Leclercq, O.S.B., *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982), p. 263.
18. Johannes Somary in a private conversation in June of 1999.
19 John Tavener, *The Music of Silence: A Composer's Testament* (London: faber and faber, 1999).
20. Ibid., p. 96.
21. Ibid., p. 97.
22. Ibid., p. 140.
23. From *Radiant Heart* by Andrew Harvey, Sounds True audio learning courses, Boulder, CO, 1999.
24. *St. Benedict's Rule,* Barry, trans., Prologue, p. 5.